

RETURN

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RETURN to an ADDRESS of the HOUSE OF COMMONS, dated the 13th March, 1905, for copies of all correspondence, Orders in Council, agreements, reports, etc., in connection with the taking over by the Dominion Government of the Halifax and Esquimalt defences.

R. W. SCOTT,
Secretary of State.

COPY of a Report of a Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council, approved by His Excellency the Governor General in Council on the 20th January, 1905.

The Committee of the Privy Council have had under consideration the subject of defence.

It will be within the recollection of Your Excellency that at the Colonial Conference, held in London in the year 1902, the suggestion was made by the first Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War that the various Colonial Governments should contribute some portion of the cost of maintenance of the Imperial Army and Navy. The Canadian Ministers present, for reasons set forth in a memorandum printed in the report of the conference, expressed their inability to concur in this suggestion. They, at the same time, acknowledged the propriety of the Dominion, as it advanced in population and wealth, making more liberal provision for the purpose of self-defence, and they stated verbally the willingness of the government of Canada to assume the responsibility of garrisoning Halifax and Esquimalt, and to this extent relieving the Imperial government of the cost of protecting the Dominion. They now deem it expedient to renew this offer in a more formal and precise manner.

In the event of the above suggestion being now favourably entertained by the Imperial authorities, your Excellency's advisers would be prepared to ask the sanction of the Parliament of Canada to the same, and this sanction being obtained, to proceed with the necessary preparations to assume the whole of the garrisoning of Halifax and Esquimalt with troops levied and paid under the authority of the Canadian parliament.

In making this offer, your Excellency's advisers desire to renew the expression of their wish and intention to avail themselves in all military matters of the advice and experience of Imperial officers, as far as may be consistent with the principle of local self-government, which has proved so beneficial not only to the colonies, but to the whole empire.

The committee advise that a copy of this minute, if approved, be communicated to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies for the information of His Majesty's government.

JOHN J. MCGEE,
Clerk of the Privy Council.

Telegraphic despatch.

MR. LYTTTELTON TO LORD GREY.

LONDON, February 8, 1905.

His Majesty's government highly appreciate and gratefully accept patriotic offer of your ministers to take over defence of Halifax and Esquimalt. His Majesty's govern-

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ment recognize that it would be difficult for Canadian government to replace troops for some time, and suggest for consideration of your government that arrangements might be made for retaining the Imperial troops for the present, Canada undertaking to defray the cost, which is about £200,000 per annum, exclusive of contribution already made by Dominion government in respect to Esquimalt, the payment by Canada to be reduced in proportion as the Dominion government is able to replace Imperial troops by Canadian troops. To enable the estimates for the coming financial year to be framed, it is essential that this arrangement should come into force at the commencement of that year on April 1, and as recruiting for garrison regiment will be stopped, the Dominion government should endeavour to meet diminution of that battalion by Canadian troops as early as possible.

LYTTELTON.

DEPARTMENT OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE,

OTTAWA, February 15, 1905.

The undersigned has the honour to report to Your Excellency that he has had under consideration the Colonial Office telegraphic despatch of February 8 instant, which conveys the acceptance by the Imperial government of the offer of Canada to assume entire responsibility for the defence of the Imperial naval stations of Halifax and Esquimalt.

The Colonial Office despatch suggests for consideration by Your Excellency's government that the arrangements might be made for retaining the Imperial troops for the present, Canada undertaking to defray the extra cost, estimated at about £200,000 per annum, beyond the amount already contributed by the Dominion government in respect of Esquimalt.

The undersigned submits to Your Excellency that while the offer by the Imperial government of the services of the Imperial troops should, in his opinion, be cordially accepted, it would for many reasons be preferable that the cost of maintenance of these troops should be defrayed directly by Canada, and under the responsibility of Your Excellency's government, rather than that a lump sum should be paid over to the War Office, and that office be made responsible for maintaining the troops—a course which would appear to be constitutionally open to objection.

The Colonial Office despatch further requests that the arrangement should come into force on the first of April next, *i.e.*, at the beginning of the British government financial year. This course does not appear to the undersigned to afford sufficient time for the necessary arrangements in Canada for undertaking a new and important responsibility to be properly matured. He strongly recommends that July 1, 1905, as the beginning of the next Canadian financial year, be fixed as the date from which Canada will assume that responsibility.

As regards the manner in which the exchange of control should be made, he recommends that the Imperial Government should be formally requested to allow the troops comprising the present garrisons of Halifax and Esquimalt, *viz.*:—

Halifax.—1 Battalion of Infantry (Roy. Gar. Regt.)

2 Companies Royal Garrison Artillery.

2 Companies Royal Engineers.

Esquimalt.—1 Company Royal Garrison Artillery.

1½ Companies Royal Engineers,

together with the staff and departmental details at each place, to remain until they can be replaced by Canadian troops.

Under the conditions proposed, Canada would pay, feed, clothe and equip these troops at exactly the same rates, under the same regulations and in the same manner as they are now paid and maintained by the War Office, and in proportion as purely Canadian permanent troops were raised and trained sufficiently to enable them to take

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the place of the Imperial troops, so would the latter be withdrawn by arrangements mutually agreed upon between Your Excellency's government and the War Office.

On July 1st, 1905, the command should be handed over by the present officers commanding the Imperial troops to the commanding officers of the Dominion forces told off for that purpose, and the Imperial commanding officers and head-quarters staffs should be relieved of their duties.

It will probably be desirable that permission should be obtained to continue some portion of the present staffs at Halifax and Esquimalt in office for such period as may mutually be agreed upon. For example it is improbable that the deputy assistant adjutant-general at Halifax, the officer commanding Royal Engineers and the Royal Engineer staff, and the officer commanding Royal Artillery and the Royal Artillery staff, and the departmental staffs of the Army Service Corps, the Ordnance Store, Medical and Pay departments, could be at once replaced by Canadian officers.

The undersigned also recommends that the War Office be asked to agree to sell Canada at vocabulary prices all ammunition, stores, clothing, or equipment which Canada may require to purchase for the Imperial troops who remain.

He further suggests, having in view the many details which will require to be settled with the War Office, that the Home Government be requested to instruct Sir Charles Parsons, the commanding officer of the Imperial troops at Halifax, to proceed to Ottawa from time to time and to act in personal communication with the Militia Council in dealing with the questions of detail which will arise.

It will be necessary to request the War Office to arrange that officers of the Canadian Militia appointed to command, or to the staff at Halifax or Esquimalt, shall be gazetted temporarily to commissions in the Imperial Army, in order that they may be legally entitled to exercise command over Imperial troops.

The Colonial Office despatch points out that as recruiting for the Royal Garrison Battalion will be stopped, it will be desirable for the Dominion Government to meet the diminution of that battalion by supplying Canadian troops as early as practicable. The undersigned proposes to give orders at once for rapidly recruiting the present permanent force to meet this requirement, but it will be necessary in order to enable Canada to provide the troops needed for the defence of Halifax and Esquimalt to increase the establishment of her permanent force considerably, if the instruction of the Active Militia is not to suffer. The new establishment required is estimated at not exceeding 4,000 of all ranks. An amendment of the Militia Act of 1904, which authorizes only an establishment of 2,000 of all ranks, will be required.

F. W. BORDEN,
Minister of Militia and Defence.

FROM LORD GREY TO MR. LYTTELTON.

Cable Code.

OTTAWA, February 21, 1905.

Borden announced your acceptance Canada's garrison offer House last night.

GREY.

FROM MR. LYTTELTON TO LORD GREY.

Cable.

LONDON, February 22, 1905.

Matter most urgent. Referring to your telegram of * 21st February, am I to understand that your ministers propose to pay from 1st April or from 1st July as stated in press telegrams? Please reply early as questions asked in parliament.

LYTTELTON.

*Garrisons: Halifax and Esquimalt.

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FROM MR. LYTTELTON TO LORD GREY.

LONDON, February 24, 1905.

Referring to your cable of the 11th instant, General Officer Commanding was not authorized to begin dismantling present defences of Halifax.

LYTTELTON.

Privy Council.

Referred to Minister of Militia and Defence.

JOHN J. MCGEE.

March 3, 1905.

FROM MR. LYTTELTON TO LORD GREY.

DOWNING STREET, April 26, 1905.

MY LORD,—With reference to your despatch No. 75 of March 3, and to my telegram of the 24th instant, I have the honour to transmit to you, to be laid before your Ministers, copy of a letter from the War Office on the subject of the arrangements for transferring to the Canadian Government the responsibility for the defence of Halifax and Esquimalt.

2. I trust that your Ministers will see their way to accepting the arrangements proposed by the Army Council in regard to the period during which Imperial troops remain as part of the garrisons.

3. It will be observed that the Council formally agree to the 1st of July next as the date from which Canada should assume the responsibility for the garrisoning of Halifax and Esquimalt, but that the question of the transfer of the command to Canadian officers is reserved for further consideration.

ALFRED LYTTELTON.

WAR OFFICE, LONDON, S.W., April 19, 1905.

The Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

SIR,—I am commanded by the Army Council to acknowledge the receipt of Colonial Office letter No. 8097 of the 16th March last, transmitting a copy of a despatch from the Governor General of Canada on the subject of the arrangements for transferring to that government the responsibility for the defence of Halifax and Esquimalt.

The council have carefully considered the proposals contained in the Minute of the Privy Council inclosed in the Governor General's despatch. As regards the date from which Canada should assume the responsibility, they are prepared (as Mr. Lyttelton is already aware) to accept July 1 next, as proposed.

But as regards the arrangements necessary during the transitional period, while regular troops of the British army remain as part of the garrisons, though the cost of their maintenance is transferred to the colonial exchequer, the council regret that legal and constitutional considerations make it impossible for them to transfer such troops to the direct payment and administration of the colonial authorities, as suggested.

The council do not overlook the fact that in the Canadian minute it is suggested that the payment of a lump sum to the War Office for maintaining the troops would also be constitutionally open to objection; but they hope that, in view of the fact that contributions representing half the cost of the Esquimalt garrison have been paid by Canada for many years past, the constitutional objections to increasing such contribution temporarily to cover the whole cost may not be found insuperable.

At the same time, the council are most anxious to do everything in their power to transfer to Canada the real responsibility for this expenditure and its control; and, with this object in view, they are prepared to produce to the Canadian government detailed accounts in support of the claims to be made for reimbursement of the actual cost of maintaining the garrisons.

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As regards the supply of ammunition, stores, &c., the council agree to the general principle that the regular British troops should continue to be supplied by this department, the cost being chargeable to Canada; and they would be prepared to sell to that government, when the British troops are withdrawn, any articles then in store which the Canadian authorities may wish to retain. The details of these arrangements might well be settled by the local military authorities in communication with the colonial department of defence.

The council have no objection to the imperial troops, now forming the garrisons of Halifax and Esquimalt, remaining at those places respectively until such time as the Dominion government can replace them by Canadian troops, but they desire to point out that they will not be in a position to keep the battalion of the Royal Garrison Regiment up to establishment, and that it is consequently desirable that the infantry of the garrison of Halifax should be replaced by Canadian troops as early as possible.

As regards the suggestion that the present officer commanding the imperial troops should hand over his command to commanding officers of the Dominion, the council regret that they cannot concur in this suggestion until the relative positions of imperial and permanent officers of the Canadian militia have been more definitely settled, a question which is now under the consideration of the council.

The council have no objection to the retention of staff and other officers enumerated in the report of the committee of the Privy Council remaining for such period as may be mutually agreed upon. Nor do they raise any objection to Major General Sir C. Parsons proceeding to Ottawa from time to time to act in personal communication with the Militia Council, as suggested.

E. W. D. WARD.

MAY 13, 1905.

To His Excellency

The Governor General in Council.

1. The undersigned has the honour to make the following report to Your Excellency in Council with regard to the Colonial Office despatch of April 26, 1905, upon the subject of the assumption by Canada of responsibility for the defence of Halifax and Esquimalt.

2. In that despatch the Colonial Office transmit and recommend to the favourable consideration of Your Excellency's government a letter from the Army Council, under date April 19, 1905, in which the Army Council reply to the proposals contained in Your Excellency's despatch No. 75 of March 3 last.

3. In their letter the Army Council, while accepting the date—July 1, 1905—proposed for the transfer of the responsibility to Canada, state that, to their regret, legal and constitutional considerations make it impossible for them to transfer their regular troops to the direct payment and administration of Canada. They again press upon Your Excellency's government the view that an extension of the course at present pursued in regard to Esquimalt, viz., the payment to the War Office of a lump sum for maintaining the troops which compose the garrisons, would be the simplest method of meeting the temporary difficulty of providing an efficient garrison during the transition period of the transfer.

4. With a view to meeting the objection felt in Canada to this course, the Army Council offers to produce to the Canadian government detailed accounts in support of their claims for reimbursement of the actual cost of maintaining the garrisons.

5. The Army Council proceed to express their regret at being unable to concur in the Canadian proposal that the officer commanding Imperial troops should hand over the command to commanding officers of the Dominion, deeming it necessary that the relative position of Imperial officers and permanent officers of the Canadian militia should first be definitely settled.

6. In the other proposals contained in Your Excellency's despatch No. 75, the Army Council generally concur, but they repeat their previous statement as to their

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inability to keep the Royal Garrison Regiment up to establishment, and the consequent desirability of replacing it by Canadian infantry as soon as possible.

7. In reply to the views thus expressed by the Army Council, the undersigned has the honour to represent to Your Excellency in Council that, in his view, the objections previously urged to the course proposed by the Army Council,—the payment by Canada to the War Office of the sum disbursed by that office for the maintenance of Halifax and Esquimalt and their garrisons,—still retain their force. The offer of the War Office to produce to Canada detailed accounts in support of that expenditure does not appear to remove these objections.

8. Nevertheless, it is recognized that some modification of the proposals contained in Your Excellency's despatch No. 75 may be necessary in order to meet the difficulties referred to by the Army Council. The undersigned therefore submits the following for Your Excellency's consideration:—

(a.) That the Army Council be asked to allow officers, warrant and N. C. officers, and men of the Imperial forces now at Halifax and Esquimalt to be transferred to the Canadian permanent force, should they be willing to accept such transfer.

(b.) That, if this be agreed to by the Army Council, Your Excellency should express to the Imperial government Canada's willingness and readiness to take over the entire control of Halifax defences and garrison on July 1, next, relieving all the Imperial troops by her own permanent troops, including those transferred as above mentioned.

(c.) That Canada should agree to pay to the War Office the whole cost of the maintenance of Esquimalt defences and garrison, instead of only one-half the cost as at present, until she could relieve the whole of that garrison similarly to that of Halifax, in due course but not later than July 1, 1906.

(d.) That the Army Council should further be asked to allow a small number of officers of all branches of the service to be seconded in the Imperial army for one, two or three years, as may be agreed upon, for temporary service with the Canadian forces. This number is estimated at not exceeding the following: Staff, 3; Royal artillery staff and Royal artillery, 8; Royal engineer staff and Royal engineers, 6; infantry, 2; services and departments, 8.

9. Should the foregoing proposals meet with Your Excellency's approval, and be agreed to by the Army Council, and should concurrence of the Army Council be promptly signified, the undersigned feels confident that the Department of Militia and Defence will be in a position to assume complete control of the Halifax defences and garrison by the date—July 1, 1905—originally proposed, or as soon after as the Imperial troops can be withdrawn, leaving the question of the terms upon which War Department property should be transferred to the Dominion to be settled in due course by mutual agreement.

Certain questions as to the terms of service of these officers and men who desire transfer to the Canadian service may still be not finally settled, but as regards the relief of the infantry of the Royal Garrison Regiment, no difficulty is anticipated.

F. W. BORDEN,
Minister of Militia and Defence.

DOWNING STREET, June 3, 1905.

MY LORD,—I have the honour to transmit to you, to be laid before your Ministers, the paper noted in the subjoined schedule.

ALFRED LYTTTELTON.

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The Officer administering
The Government of Canada.

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Date.....
Description of Document.....
War Office to C. O., Halifax Military Command.
25th May.

WAR OFFICE,
LONDON, S.W., May 25, 1905.

SIR,—I am commanded by the Army Council to inform you that it is observed in the *Canada Gazette*, G.O., 65, dated April 4 last, certain officers of the Canadian military forces have been appointed to the command of districts in the Dominion.

As it is presumed that the Halifax command will shortly be incorporated in the Maritime Provinces command, to which Colonel C. W. Drury, C.B., R.C.A., has been appointed, I am to request that the Dominion Government may be asked to inform Major General Sir C. S. B. Parsons, K.C.M.G., as soon as his services are no longer required, so that he may return to this country.

His term of command expired on March 9 last, but he has consented to remain at Halifax pending the settlement of the transfer of the garrison at that station to the Dominion Government.

R. H. BRADE.

Cable Code.

FROM EARL GREY TO MR. LYTTTELTON.

OTTAWA, June 14, 1905.

Referring to my despatch No. 186, May 19, Minister of Militia has asked me privately when may answer be expected; it will help him in statement he wishes to make in House of Commons.

GREY.

The Deputy Minister, June 23, 1905.

War Office Letter, May 25.

This letter was considered in Militia Council this day, and it was decided to request that His Excellency might be moved to inquire, by cable, when the Royal Garrison Regiment would be withdrawn, so that their place could be taken by the Royal Canadian Regiment.

E. F. JARVIS,
Secretary, the Military Council.

THE MILITARY SECRETARY TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR
GENERAL, OTTAWA.

June 23, 1905.

SIR,—I have the honour, by direction of the Minister in Militia Council, to acquaint you, for the information of His Excellency the Governor General that in accordance with Colonial Office despatch of February 8 last, accepting the offer of Canada to take over the defence of Halifax and Esquimalt wherein it was stated that recruiting for the Royal Garrison Regiment would be stopped, the Department of Militia and

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Defence at once took steps to recruit the Canadian permanent force to provide for the relieving of the Royal Garrison Regiment, and that the Royal Canadian Regiment has now reached an establishment which renders its accommodation in the existing barracks seriously inconvenient.

In view of the foregoing, I am directed by the Minister in Militia Council to request that His Excellency may be moved to communicate with His Majesty's Government by cable, inquiring when it may be expected that the Royal Garrison Regiment will be withdrawn, and their place taken by the Royal Canadian Regiment.

L. F. PINAULT, Colonel,
Deputy Minister of Militia and Defence.

Cable code.

FROM LORD GREY TO MR. LYTTTELTON.

JUNE 23, 1905.

Referring to your telegram of February 8, Halifax garrison recruiting of Canadian permanent force to relieve Royal Garrison Regiment has gone until now. Its accommodation in existing barracks is attended by serious inconvenience. Under the circumstances, Minister of Militia asks when Royal Garrison Regiment may be expected to be withdrawn and its place taken by Royal Canadian Regiment.

GREY.